

Cornell Provides Figures On Barging and Trucking

by Sara Maher and Briana Warsing
Cornell has been listening. In a Cornell Community Task Force meeting last week, the University supplied the trucking and barging specifics that the Roosevelt Island Community Coalition (RICC) has been seeking. Cornell also expressed willingness to work with RICC on monitoring Island air quality.

On the education front, the Tech Hackathon required by the lease has been scheduled.

Trucking & Barging
Representatives from Cornell Tech and Tishman Construction gave demolition and construction updates at the March 2 session that dealt with one issue of special concern to Islanders: trucking.

Andrew Winters, Director of Capital Projects for Cornell Tech, characterized the presentation as a “better picture of what’s happening in the immediate future.” He reiterated the goals of the project’s Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). “We did make a commitment to reduce the number of construction vehicles along Main Street by approximately 40% from the numbers included in the EIS, so that’s the starting point,” he said before explaining the methodology behind achieving the reduction.

The EIS predicted a total of 34,258 truck trips over the four-year project, breaking down to an average of 37 per day with a peak of 67 per day during the third quarter of 2015. A 40% reduction would bring the total down to 20,554 with an average of about 22 trucks per day, and a peak of 40 per day. (These numbers are for the number

of trucks per day; for trips to and from the construction site, double the number.)

Starting in October 2015, barges will be used in bringing trucks to the Island.

In line with the EIS, Cornell Tech made three other commitments regarding barging. Barges will be used to remove all building material not being reused; nearly all bulk materials will be delivered and removed by barge; and the heavy materials, such as steel and large equipment, will be delivered by barge (although foundation materials will still be brought in by truck.) Barges are already being used to transport construction waste and equipment.

Demolition began in spring 2014, and now, about 15 months in, Winters reports that phase one of demolition “has been declared clean and complete.” He said most of the 16,250 tons of waste were removed by barge. Excavation at the site was scheduled to start March 3, with most of the equipment also being delivered by barge.

Cornell and Tishman are working to create a central barging plan that can be used by all contractors. Tishman will be working with each contractor to coordinate delivery schedules. The key, said Winters, is to “pull the peaks all down by aligning the peak barging period with the peak construction period... That’s the way we can achieve real impact in terms of reducing the numbers and the impact on Main Street.”

The plan starts with one barge per day, moving to two per day in 2016. As construction nears completion

See **Cornell**, page 9

RIOC Demanding Catholics Pay Advance Rent on Chapel

RIOC wants the Island’s Catholics to pay advance rent – three months’ worth – for advance scheduling of the Chapel of the Good Shepherd. At last week’s meeting of the Residents Association (RIRA) Common Council, RIOC was asked to back off.

Good Shepherd is both a chapel and a community center. Under new policies adopted by the Cuomo administration, community groups, including religious bodies, must pay for use of facilities managed by the State, including, in this case, a house of worship.

RIOC originally demanded an advance payment of six months, but reduced it to three. “At our parish council meeting last night,” reported parishioner Susan Pirard, “Father [Kallumudy] shared with us the email he received from Donna Mosely [of RIOC]. It stated that we were to pay three months in advance by April 2, or we would be locked out of Good Shepherd and they [RIOC] would have personnel at the door to make sure we could not enter.

“Not only were we deeply offended with the tone RIOC took with us, [but] the timing of their negotiations puts us out of our worship space at the beginning of Holy Week, with Easter Sunday on the 5th.”

Pirard’s statement went on to add that the parish has “lost revenue by the closing of our thrift shop,” which RIOC turned over for commercial rental by Hudson/Related, the partnership handling all the Island’s retail rental operations under a master lease given by RIOC. “We

are operating on a month-to-month basis. We would like our faith communities of residents on Roosevelt Island to come together to discuss with RIOC a way that we can continue to worship in our space and have the respect of RIOC while we additionally respect the requirements of the for-profits that also occupy the same space.

“We are not asking that we not pay rent,” the statement concluded, “only that we pay as we and other faiths in the same space have always paid, month to month.”

At the end of its meeting Wednesday night, the RIRA Council voted to back the parish’s request.

Related editorial on page 2

Remembering the Tragedy and Triumph of Selma

by Todd Jagerson and Jennifer Dunning

This month marks the 50th anniversary of two civil rights marches that changed America. On March 7, 1965, which came to be known as Bloody Sunday, some 600 men and women set out to walk from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery, the state capital, to push for voting rights then denied to black Southerners. National activists and even braver locals, they were brutally pushed back as local and state police met them at the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

A wearying 10 years had passed since the start of the modern-day movement, but this time it would be different. Protests were increasingly newsworthy. Shocking images of the attack galvanized mainstream America and, two weeks later, 4,000 people headed to Selma to complete the march. By its end five days later, on March 25, the crowd had grown to 25,000, led by the Rev. Martin Luther King and other activists, religious leaders, and celebrities. Five months later, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting



Paula Beltrone

35:12
Saturday, March 14, 2015

Is it over? Is it finally over? No, I mean *really, really*, o v e r. Are we done with this? *Please?*

Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, On the Line to Solve Island’s Problems With NYS Governance, Started Young

by Joyce M. Short

Rebecca Seawright’s first dive into politics came when the county leader of her 4H group was fired without explanation. The leader was a woman, and there seemed to be antipathy from an old-boy-network that expected women to confine themselves to caring for their families.

Seeing an injustice, the young Seawright was outraged. Her challenge to the establishment, and her efforts to assert that something unjust had taken place, generated a heavy backlash. “People even stopped doing business at [my father’s] store,” she remembers.

That was years ago, in Texas, where Seawright earned her degrees in political science and home economics from Tarleton University.

It was a different time and a different place. Seawright earned 4H awards raising horses, cattle, and hogs. At the state fair, she won a first place in the “clothing division” for a record book that chronicled all the business she’d conducted. Why clothing? “Because the Future Farmers of America didn’t allow women to compete.” So she competed through the Future Homemakers of America.

New York State Assembly

Last month, Seawright was sworn in as the first female State Assembly



Member for Roosevelt Island and the rest of the 76th Assembly District. Her past efforts for women’s equality were evidenced by the notables in attendance. Sonia Osorio, the current President of the New York City and New York State Chapters of the National Organization for Women, who’d sought Seawright out and convinced her to compete for the Assembly seat, was on hand. Also attending was Seawright’s longtime mentor,

Sarah Weddington, who, beginning at age 23, successfully argued Roe vs. Wade before the U.S. Supreme Court, establishing abortion rights throughout the nation.

But the celebration of Seawright’s success was gender-neutral. U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer, City Controller Scott Stringer, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and several other male dignitaries also attended, See **Seawright**, page 9

RIYP Offering Career Counsel

Island youth seeking work or career guidance will find it on the Island starting March 23, according to the Roosevelt Island Youth Program (RIYP).

Christine Suero, a counselor from the Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee, will provide help with job training, resume coaching, and internship placement. Individual appointments will be available.

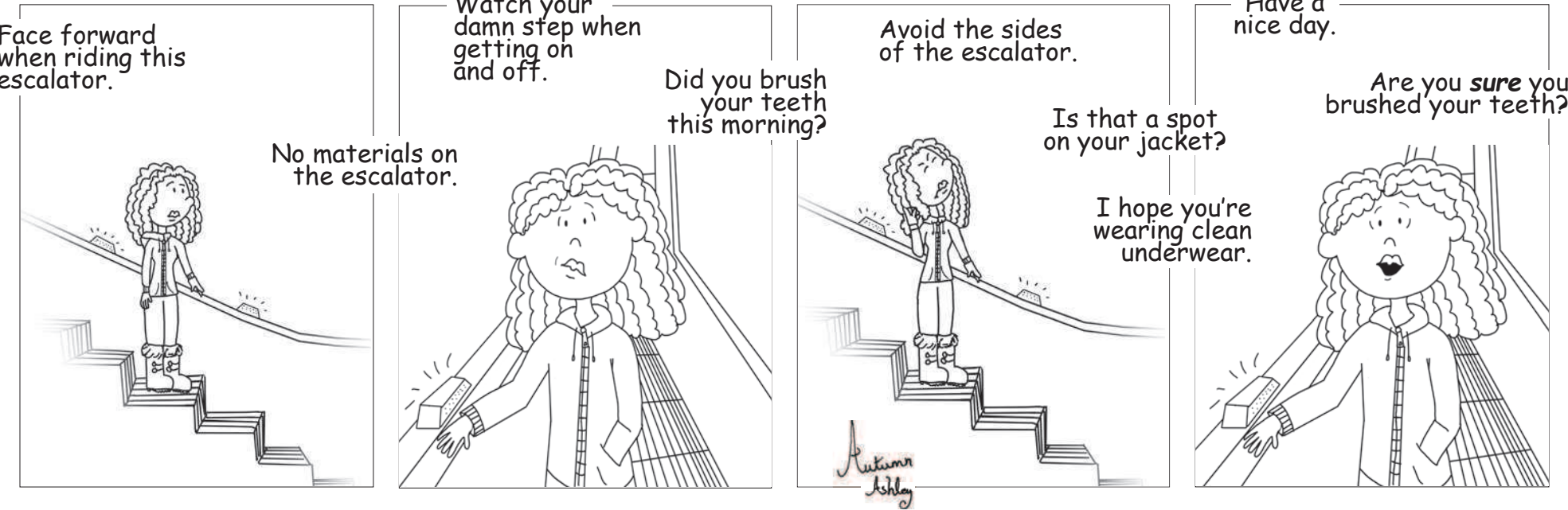
RIYP will present an informational session Monday, March 23, at 6:00 p.m. in the Youth Center, 506 Main Street (ad, back page). Suero is also prepared to offer counseling on housing, public assistance, and immigration. It’s all free.

so Jagerson and Sherry rented a small house in town. “Selma was not Southern California, and the differences were disturbing to us both. Most obviously, the black poverty and the horrid ‘separate but equal’ black schools. And most distressing, the eyes-averted, cringing fear of any black when speaking to any white person.”

He and Brett were puttering with an old car when “Sherry pulled up on our Vespa motor scooter to announce there was some kind of demonstration going on at the black church downtown – Brown’s Chapel – and we should take a look. So the three of us squeezed onto the scooter, and when we arrived downtown we found total confusion: 600 mostly black kids were singing and marching in a raggedy line down the street. And an even larger crowd of whites, young and old, were shouting racial insults and threats from the sidewalks.

“In our confusion, we followed along on the scooter behind the line of marching black kids, and we kept following when they turned to go

See **Selma**, page 4



The Editorial Page

Lack of Elections, Lack of Choice

What can be done about RIOC and the RIOC Board of Directors?

In the March 4 meeting of the RIOC Board, stroller moms brought complaints about elevators at the Manhattan Tram station, and RIOC President Charlene Indelicato apologized – for poor communication about them – not for RIOC ignoring the years of trouble with those elevators that made it clear, long ago, that the wintertime crisis would certainly occur again.

Residents Association V.P. Sherie Helstien brought a complaint about the stupidly-managed RIOC website that has long ignored the majority of browsers now in service, then was upbraided by Board member Margie Smith for not being aware that she could use another (inferior) brand of browser to access RIOC’s lame site.

But Smith isn’t the only RIOC apologist now serving on the RIOC Board of Directors. Howard Polivy, too, was delegated by Indelicato to non-answer the tough questions that *The WIRE* asked about the precipitous decision to charge the Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance rent for the quarters that it prepared and then occupied without rent for three decades. Of course, Smith had excuses for that, as well: *The State made us do it. We’re trying, but the State made us do it.*

No. The RIOC Board made its own hammock in this case, by turning over valuable community space for commercial exploitation, thereby creating a phony shortage of community space and giving real-estate interests license to charge non-profit organizations – the ones this Island used to *nurture* – for space that has been an important instrument in Roosevelt Island becoming the community it is – or was, before these crises were visited upon it by a RIOC Board persuaded that it must do Albany’s bidding.

A reckless ruling by New York State’s Authorities Budget Office, made without reference to the particular differences on Roosevelt Island, should be met with a simple response: *That doesn’t work for a community of people. We are not the Triboro Bridge. We will ignore your ruling*

until you take into account the nature of this particular public benefit corporation.

But the RIOC Board hasn’t taken that stance. Apparently, from what Polivy’s wife said defensively at a Resident Association Common Council meeting, the RIOC Board feels that all it can do is *ask for advice on how to comply* with a ruling totally inappropriate for RIOC.

That’s why RIOC Board nominating elections – and the opportunity to elect Board members not yet co-opted by the system – and a governor responsive to those elections – are needed.

RIOC Board members do get co-opted after a while. They may go in determined to make RIOC better, believing they can do so. After serving expired terms for too long, they’ve bought into the “no-can-do” roadblock that bloated bureaucracies invoke whenever asked to do something out of the ordinary – like say no to State policies that just don’t fit the needs of a community. We are not the Triboro Bridge.

We’ve cited Polivy and Smith here, but those who sit silent and express no outrage must share the guilt. If bold defiance is needed, let’s have some in place of contented lassitude. If the times demand acts of courage, let’s see them.

When the President of RIOC is the only contact with the State administration, “the second floor says so” can become the excuse for avoiding anything inconvenient. A RIOC President who does not want to advocate for this community, and is focused on maintaining a career as a bureaucrat, can just invoke “Albany” as the excuse for doing nothing that might call unpleasant attention to his or her career path.

As for the Board members, “we’re not allowed to tell the public” ignores the fact that they are doing *the people’s business*.

Reform is needed. Needed desperately. What’s needed is an elected RIOC Board willing to exercise its power to seek and hire an experienced and creative community manager beholden to this community, not to a gubernatorial appointments process.

Let’s catch this falling star before its light is extinguished by the clumsy acts of an uncaring State administration.

Letters

To the Editor:

As a former Island resident, member of Good Shepherd [Protestant] Church (not Cabrini Parish) and board member of Good Shepherd, I feel compelled to respond to the requirement for Cabrini to pay rent in advance.

When the issue of rent first came up, Good Shepherd [Protestant parish] dutifully paid every month. However, Father Peter Miqueli was adamant that the Catholic Church was above the law, and he refused to pay. This was for at least a few years.

Because we have moved from the Island, I am not privy to what may have occurred in the past two years. Cabrini has *not* always paid rent as Good Shepherd has, and people need to be made aware of this.

Deborah Crabtree

To the Editor:

The lovely February 13 Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance (MST&DA) Gala was both pleasurable and hopeful.

Pleasurable because of the careful event planning, attentive program execution, and great evident joy of the participants.

Hopeful because it was a replay of the excitement and commitment and partnering of Roosevelt Island 35 years ago, when the first adventurers did their very best to make this the caring community of neighbors originally intended – and that it had become before real estate became king.

Is it possible that the Gala spirit of the MST&DA might signal a reclaiming of the Island for the residents and their community needs?

David J. Bauer

Letters Policy

The WIRE welcomes letters of local interest to the community, and to/from officials. Requests for a Name Withheld signature will be considered, but the writer’s name, address, and phone number must be provided for verification and for our records; letters submitted anonymously will not be published. Submit letters by email text to MainStreetWIRE@usa.net, or on a disk left at the lobby desk at 531 Main Street, addressed to *The WIRE*. If you email, expect a confirming response and, if you receive none, resend and call 212-826-9056 to alert us. Alternatives: Typed copy left at 531 Main Street (allow extra time for typesetting); clearly handwritten letters will be considered, if brief; allow extra time for typesetting. We are not able to take telephone dictation of letters. All letters are subject to acceptance and editing for length and clarity. Recommended maximum length, 350 words; longer letters will be considered if their content, in the judgment of the editors, merits the required space.

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Krystyn Donnelley and students of Legacy High School;
Kim Massey and students from the PS/IS 217 Beacon Program,
Juniors and Cadettes of Girl Scout Troop 3324

Letters deadline

for March 28 issue: Tuesday, March 24, 5:00 p.m.

COMING UP

– This Weekend –

Subway disruption: Southbound platform at Lex/63rd closed **Fri Mar 13** 9:45pm to **Mon Mar 16** 5am. Manhattan-bound trains will skip only that station. Island-bound service from that station will be normal. **Same disruption next weekend.**

Master Swim class registration now available at msWIRE.us/RIOCrec. Additional information on page 10.

Islander Bonnie Goodman performs in *The Songs of Jule Styne*, **Sat Mar 14** 5pm, Don't Tell Mama, 343 W. 46th St. Reservations at DontTellMamaNYC.com or 212-757-0788 (after 4pm). \$20 cover plus 2-drink minimum, cash only.

Opening reception for **Piakowski One-Artist Photo Show, Bloom**, **Sat Mar 14** 6-8pm, Octagon Gallery, 888 Main St.

Island pianist **Roy Eaton** performs *Chopin Meets Joplin Meets Jazz*, **Sun Mar 15** 2pm, Unity Church of Christianity, 14 E. Mineola Av., Valley Stream, NY. Donation \$25.

– **Regularly Scheduled Meetings and Events** –
See separate listing, page 10.

– The Next Two Weeks –

St. Patrick's Day, Tue Mar 17.

Bicycling Basics presented by BikeNY, **Tue Mar 17** 10am-12noon, 1pm-3pm, Sportspark. Free. Register at bike.nyc/education/classes. (See *Community Column*, this page.)

Movie Night at the Library cancelled.

Book Discussion, *Vacationland* by Sara Stonich, **Thu Mar 19** 6:30pm, Library. (Book changed.)

Open House and Women's History Month observance, **Fri Mar 20** 2-5pm, the community office of Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright, 1365 First Avenue, Manhattan. Info: 212-288-4607.

Subway disruption: Southbound platform at Lex/63rd closed **Fri Mar 20** 9:45pm to **Mon Mar 23** 5am. Manhattan-bound trains will skip only that station. Island-bound service from that station will be normal.

Career Center Information Session, Mon Mar 23 6-8pm, presented by and at Roosevelt Island Youth Program, 506 Main St. Resume services, interview coaching, job search, career training, more. Info: 212-527-2505 or email riBeacon@gmail.com. (Ad, back page.)

Bicycle Commuting 101 class presented by BikeNY, **Wed Mar 25** 7-8:30pm, Sportspark. Free. To register, email cgoodspeed@bike.nyc or call 212-870-2075. (See *Community Column*, this page.)

RIOC Board of Directors meets, **Thu Mar 26** 5:30pm, Manhattan Park Community Center, 8 River Rd. Public-comment portion precedes formal meeting. (Meeting moved from Mar 12.)

The Main Street WIRE – **Sat Mar 28.** Advertising deadlines: Display, Wed Mar 18 (advertising accepted after deadline on a space-available basis); decision date for circulars/inserts, Tue Mar 24; 6,000 copies due Thu Mar 26. **Future issues:** Mar 28; Apr 11, 25; May 9, 23; Jun 6, 20; July issue to be announced; Aug 1, 29; Sep 12, 26; Oct 10, 24; Nov 7, 21; Dec 12. News phone 212-826-9056; urgent matters, 917-617-0449. Email press releases and feature-story suggestions to MainStreetWIRE@usa.net. Advertising (display & classified) 917-587-3278 or msWIREads@gmail.com.

Islander Gerald Starlight performs a *Spring Concert* on the shakuhachi, **Sat Mar 28** 3pm, Jefferson Market Library, 425 Sixth Av. Free. Info: tinyurl.com/GS032815 or 212-243-4334.

Easter Egg Hunt, Sun Mar 29, 10:30am, Manhattan Park Green. (See RIRA Column, this page.)

– Future Weeks –

Learn to Ride (adults) presented by BikeNY, **Tue Mar 31** 10am-12noon, 1pm-3pm, Sportspark. Free. Register at bike.nyc/education/classes

Cancelled (Sun Apr 5): First Sunday Jazz Salon (Returns May 4).

Motorgate Gallery opens, **Fri Apr 10.**

Voting in Participatory Budgeting, Mon Apr 13, PS/IS 217, plus subsequent dates and locations. (See RIRA Column, this page.)

Book Discussion, *Vacationland* by Sarah Stonich, **Thu Apr 16** 6:30pm, Library.

Cornell Environmental Hackathon, Fri Apr 17. (Report, page 9.)

iDig2Learn Earth Day event, **Sat Apr 18** 10am-1pm, Tramway Plaza Lawn (on the Island, near Visitor Kiosk). Dress for planting. Free.

Earth Day, Wed Apr 22.

Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance presents *Adult Musical Theatre Studio: As the World Goes Round*, **Sun Apr 5-Mon Apr 27.** (Ad, page 12.)

Cornell Construction & Task Force quarterly meeting, **Mon Apr 27** 6-8pm, Gallery RIVAA. Open to the public.

Mothers' Day, Mon May 10.

Main Street Teen Theatre presents *Urinetown*, **Fri May 15-Sun May 17.** (Ad, page 12.)

Child School/Legacy High School annual **Founder's Dinner, Thu May 21**, 6pm, Terrace on the Park, 52-11 111th St., Flushing NY 11368; ticket price to be announced at a future date.

Book Discussion, *Black, White & Jewish – Autobiography of a Shifting Self*, by Rebecca Walker, **Thu May 21** 6:30pm, Library.

Memorial Day, Mon May 25.

Main Street Children's Theatre presents *Little Shop of Horrors*, **Fri May 29-Mon June 1.** (Ad, page 12)

Bike New York Spring Kickoff Party, Sat May 30.

Roosevelt Island Day, Sat Jun 13.

Flag Day, Sun Jun 14.

Book Discussion, *Half a Life* by V.S. Naipaul, **Thu Jun 18** 6:30pm, Library.

Outdoor Movie, Sat Jun 27.

Independence Day, Sat Jul 4.

Outdoor Movie, Sun Jul 11.



Like the end of the longest of nights, it seems that the dawn of spring has finally come to our little ship floating in the East River. As the snow and ice that have capped our streets, walkways, and parks for nearly three months melt to reveal fresh ground, our Island families, friends, and neighbors emerge from the cocoon of their apartments to bask in the warming sun and breathe the fresh air. Spring brings a number of Island celebrations intended to renew the ties that bond us as neighbors, and the first is...

Easter Egg Hunt

On Sunday, March 29, RIRA's Social, Cultural and Educational Services Committee, in conjunction with over 25 other Island organizations, businesses, and charities, will be holding the Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Starting at 10:30 a.m. at the Manhattan Park Green across the street from Gristedes, Roosevelt Island children ages 8 and under are invited to participate in an egg hunt like no other. Rain or shine, this year's hunt will include a visit from the Easter Bunny, story time under the tree, bonnet-making, children's book giveaways, and, of course, the egg hunt. Space will be limited, and registration is required for this year's event, so drop an email to the SC&E Committee at SCE@riraonline.com for more information and to be put on the pre-registration mailing list. We are also looking for volunteers to help stuff eggs and to assemble gift baskets, and we need donations of items for this year's giveaways. If you have the time, talent, or know-how to help make this year's hunt a very special one for the expected 500 child attendees, email the SC&E Committee at SCE@riraonline.com.

Hands-Only CPR

The RIRA goal of teaching every resident the life-saving skill of hands-only CPR continues, with free training provided every week from March through July to any interested Islander. Sessions are offered in various community locations – such as the Senior Center Lounge and the Good Shepherd Center – and in just 15 minutes you can join over 450 neighbors who've been trained to know when someone needs CPR, and what to do. For questions and information on how to register, contact RICPRHandsOnly@hotmail.com.

The RIRA Column



Jeffrey Escobar, President
Roosevelt Island Residents Association
jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com

Participatory Democracy

During last week's RIRA Common Council meeting, a couple of the resolutions that were passed requiring RIOC action warrant mention here, because of their far-reaching effects on two long-standing non-profit community institutions – the Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance (MST&DA) and the St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Parish. Both organizations face onerous lease charges by RIOC that will change how they operate, provide their services, and use Island spaces. With MST&DA, as previously mentioned, RIOC's lease rates for their use of the Cultural Center at 548 Main Street are so high that they won't be able to provide

See **RIRA Column**, page 10

The WIRE publishes these columns, exclusively, as a service to the community and to the entities invited to provide them, and does not control or censor their content.

The history of Bike New York is the history of the Five Boro Bike Tour. It all started with an audacious plan to take a group of high schoolers on a ride across New York City in February 1977, the daylong-ride culmination of a bike safety program organized by American Youth Hostels (AYH). The original concept of the ride was to allow the students to practice what they had learned over the course of the program. Most recreational rides at the time took place in the countryside, but this one would explore and celebrate the urban landscape.

The 50-mile ride started at Flushing Meadows-Corona Park in Queens, went through Brooklyn to Staten Island, and then, after a quick ferry trip, up through Manhattan and the Bronx before ending back at Flushing Meadows. There was no entry fee and only one sponsor, Nathan's, which gave out hot dogs and sodas at the ride's one and only rest stop in the Bronx. The ride was so successful that AYH organizers decided to do it again the following year, and the year after that, and every year after that until 1999. By then, the event was too big for AYH to handle on its own – they did have a hostel to run! – so they created Bike New York to handle the tour in 2000.

The TD Five Boro Bike Tour is now the world's largest charitable bike ride, with 32,000 participants. Since 2005, the annual Tour has funded Bike New York's free bike education program, which teaches bike skills to tens of thousands of kids and adults each year. We operate our classes out of shipping containers situated in more than a dozen paved, flat, car-free spaces throughout the five boroughs. In these containers (called Community Bike Education Centers, or CBECs), we store a fleet of bikes, helmets, and the equipment we need to host classes. In 2014 alone, we taught bike skills to more than 16,000 New Yorkers. In 2013, we received a grant from a private family

The Community Column

foundation to bring our programming to Roosevelt Island. The mission of the Roosevelt Island Pilot Program is to raise the profile of cycling as the most efficient and practical method of transportation for residents and visitors on Roosevelt Island. We now have two CBECs on the Island. There's a location at Sportspark where, for the first time ever, we're able to offer year-round programming, thanks to RIOC and the Sportspark staff, who have graciously allowed us to use the gym for classes. During the warmer months, we move operations to our outdoor CBEC under the helix ramp, and classes are held at the basketball court next to Capobianco Field.

Through our programs and events on the Island, we hope to become a Roosevelt Island mainstay. Last year, we introduced residents to our organization through classes and various events, including a free bike-maintenance pop-up shop, resident-only classes, and a spring kickoff party. One of our most popular events last season was the Summer Ride Series, where we lent our bikes and helmets to residents and took them on rides around the Island. We also ventured off-Island to Randall's Island and Summer Streets in Manhattan. We look forward to doing another Ride Series this season!

Since being on Roosevelt Island, we've enjoyed partnering with local organizations, businesses, and schools. In May 2014, we invited the Roosevelt Island Youth Program Drum Corps to perform at our spring kickoff party. In June, we worked with the Roosevelt Island Visual Art Association to organize a community

See **Bike New York**, page 10



Caitlin Goodspeed
Outreach Manager, Bike New York
cgoodspeed@bike.nyc

The Community Column features a broadly chosen rotating series of columnists and topics.

Selma, from page 1

over the wide bridge across the Alabama River. There were whites up on the bridge watching, and as we reached the top, a nicely-dressed, middle-aged white woman leaned over and said to me in a pleasant voice, ‘You don’t want to follow them niggers, son, they ’bout to get whooped with an ugly stick.’ But the scene below had already stopped us.

“The black kids were still marching down the far side of the bridge. Up ahead, across the road, 500 yards in front of them, was a solid human barricade across the highway. It was a frightening sight, dozens of police cars side-by-side in an arch across the highway, surrounded by dozens of uniformed state troopers and other rough-looking men – who were the scariest.

“When an emergency occurs in this part of the country, the local sheriff is empowered to deputize civilians to help. On this day, the deputies were easy to spot, usually in beer-stained T-shirts over protruding bellies, but mostly by the hardhats and axe handles they had been issued by the police. Some had also brought their own equipment, including snarling dogs and bullwhips they kept cracking while shouting hog calls – *Sooie!* – and waving rebel flags. All of them – troopers, deputies, and other white spectators – were shouting with fists and fingers raised at the approaching line of scrawny, now terrified black marchers. They were so loud that we almost didn’t hear the state trooper at the top of the bridge order us to turn around:

“‘Get ya Yankee asses offa this here f*ckin’ bridge!’ he shouted.

“We turned back, but we were already too caught up to walk away. So we rushed upriver a half-mile, where we left the scooter and scrambled across an old railway bridge. Then we began running across an empty cotton field to where the black kids were just about to reach the troopers. As we approached, the kids had stopped at the wall of police cars and knelt down, and began praying and singing religious songs. They were now almost entirely surrounded by white people – troopers, deputies, and fellow citizens – who continued to shout and spit at them.

“We kept running across the cotton field until we were within 50 yards of the singing, praying marchers. Then *bam! bam! bam!* A series of loud explosions sounded amid the kneeling black kids, and a thick cloud of tear gas welled up to obscure the carnage as troopers, deputies, and attack dogs waded into the kneeling kids. With the tear gas explosions, we stopped, frozen. Then, out of the thick cloud came a hoard of screaming, blood-covered black kids, desperate to escape, and running straight at us three pink-cheeked pieces of white bread. We were already backing away, and when the hoard emerged from the cloud – a vision seen in many nightmares since – we turned and ran like hell.

“I have two vivid memories of what happened next.

“When we turned and ran like hell, we thought we were fleeing the screaming black hoard – until we heard and then saw the fastest of the kids starting to pass us. It was in that moment that I turned to the black kid coming on my left and exchanged a poignant, long-remembered look. We were both terrified, but in that moment, there was something else as well, something ironic, as if he were asking me, ‘So how do you like it, whitey?’

“The other memory of that day comes from only a few minutes later. We had made it back across the cotton field and the railroad bridge, but in our panic to get away we couldn’t get the damned Vespa started. Just then a car, also desperate to escape, came up behind us. We were blocking the only escape route, and while Brett and I fumbled frantically to get the scooter started, Sherry, in a fit of nerves and terror, began laughing hysterically.

“The car was driven by a black man and was packed full of his family, the back seat filled with a half-dozen kids, all



Islander Todd Jagerson, back in the day

screaming and crying. I will never forget that man’s face. He was middle-aged and panicked. When he saw Sherry laughing – and misinterpreted it as contempt – his fear became anger and he went berserk, pounding and stomping, his eyes wet with tears of rage. Then, just as he jumped out of his car and started running toward us, the scooter started and we made our escape.

“When it was safe, we stopped. The three of us sat there on the scooter in silence, stunned, wordless. In all of our time in Selma, none of us had ever seen a black person get angry, talk back, or even give a white person a dirty look – regardless of the level of insult or provocation. Despite the non-violence preached by Dr. King, this man, in his fear, humiliation, and anger, had crossed a line. I didn’t blame him – for a moment, I was him – but as a portent of things to come, it was chilling. In the difficult period ahead, that angry man’s tears of rage stayed with me for decades.

“What was different about this ‘small protest march’ that got ruthlessly squashed?” Jagerson writes. “What made little Selma so special, such a turning point?

“If God exists, he certainly works in mysterious ways. And this one was a pip. On that day, God snuck a *Life Magazine* photographer named Charles Moore into the crowd. Moore captured the whole ugly mess on film, which appeared in a six-page *Life* cover story on March 19, 1965.

“The cat was out of the bag. After centuries of brutality and thousands of lynchings in the South, most Americans were finally disgusted and angry enough to do something about it.

“In just two weeks, another Selma march took place, lasting five days, with 25,000 black and white marchers from throughout the country. It was led by King (and every liberal politician and entertainer who could get there), protected by thousands of National Guardsmen, and covered by every news media outlet on the planet, especially those new-fangled

TV people – who had just discovered how to transmit local events nationwide (good timing, God).

“Sherry and I were there watching that second march along with the locals – who were still screaming, cursing, and spitting at the marchers. We weren’t allowed to march ourselves, but I was required to remain in military uniform at all times to help establish ‘a Federal presence’ – and to serve as targets for still-outraged locals shouting insults and throwing garbage at us.”

The Jagersons saw Rev. King go by on that second march. I did not. It didn’t matter.... change was possible. I had grown up, in part, in segregated Washington, D.C., haunted by half-understood events and the stories my mother told, bemusedly. Years later, I had returned for the 1963 March on Washington. It was not possible not to be in Selma.

The formidably well-organized Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) had a small desk in the dark lobby of an office building on lower Fifth Avenue where you could sign up to join the march. At the Montgomery bus station, there were cars waiting to drive late arrivers to a meeting in a basement office. There, young organizers talked of how to avoid and respond to violence, interrupted at one point by a rock hurled through a window at us. But the most frightening thing was to see young whites, clearly not locals, ostentatiously hugging young blacks of the opposite sex outside the office. People had been killed for less here.

Then we were driven to the places where we would stay overnight. Mine was a small rural church, with sleeping bags filling the cleared worship space. The others were my age, in their mid-20’s and mostly white, and a small skinny local black boy about eight years old. He and I had come alone and so we hooked up, sleeping next to each other on the worn wooden floor. Smart, curious, and assertive, he badly wanted to go to New York. I still think of him, and imagine that today he must be either in prison or a CEO.

Early the next morning, the frightened elderly black pastor and his wife brought in huge trays of home-cooked breakfast – plates filled with biscuits, eggs, and meat. But the other marchers refused the food. They were on a hunger strike, they said. “Do you like to eat?” I asked my small buddy. Yes, he did. So we tore into the food, trying hard to be appreciative for everyone.

The march that day could not have been as long or the tarmac as dusty as I remember, as we walked five or six abreast in a ragged line that stretched endlessly ahead and eventually halted. The speakers’ voices drifted back. I don’t remember any words, just the exotic cadences of black preaching. Could I have heard Rev. King? But the familiar, beloved songs we sang said it all. We were trees standing in the water. We would not be moved.

Soon after, I heard that a man on crutches, so poignant (and photogenic) an image as he marched up front, was a raving anti-Semite. So much for an end to bigotry. But there was little sense of individuals. We seemed to press forward slowly as a single, tired, ordinary person until there was no room ahead on that narrow road lined with tired-looking trees.

After a while, a black woman ahead of me, my age and build, sank to the ground just as I did and we sat back to back, wearily propping each other up. And that is what has stayed most vividly in my memory: two curving backs, sharing wordless peace and comfort as unambiguous as the struggle.

Racism has turned out to be so much more complicated and deep-rooted than most of us could have suspected. But one thing is clear and incontrovertible. “Just four decades after joining those black kids escaping across the cotton fields in Alabama,” Jagerson writes, “in 2008, my children, and the children of that angry black man, together, elected our first black President.”



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Translation: Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the light of the holy Shabbat.

www.RIJewish.org

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Adventures OFF-Island

curated by Sara Maher

If your primary interests include “drunk” and “slam dunk,” March is pretty fun for you. You can forget about the solid-or-slush debate that you and your boots just lost by getting down and boozy in a bar with big TVs. But if your outlook is a little more, shall we say, *worldly*, March is also Women’s History Month and Irish-American History Month, and history is anything but boring.

Obligatory Sporting Event

March Madness is in full swing at the Garden. Start out small with the PSAL Championships, featuring the top NYC high school basketball teams, before checking out the New York Knicks. If you prefer blood over balls, the Rangers’ regular hockey season runs through April 9, or there’s *Mc-Mayhem in Midtown*, a boxing match between FDNY Bravest Boxing and the Irish National Police Force Boxing Club.

➡ F downtown to 34th-Herald Square and walk west on 34th to 4 Pennsylvania Plaza. PSAL Championships are Sat Mar14; girls’ AA championship at 11am and boys’ AA championship at 1pm. Tickets \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. Tickets and info at PSAL.org. The Knicks play Tue Mar 17 at 7:30pm, Thu Mar 19 at 7:30pm, Mon Mar 23 at 7:30pm, Wed Mar 25 at 7pm, and Fri Mar 27 at 7:30pm. Tickets start at \$75. Full season schedules and tickets for the Knicks and the Rangers at thegarden.com/sporting-events. McMayhem on

Saturday, March 14 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$35. theater-atmsg.com/mcmayhem

Obligatory Holiday Parade

NYC’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade is older than the city itself, celebrating its 253rd year. Mayor de Blasio is skipping this year in favor of a more, er, inclusive fête, but you can see the City’s Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan as Grand Marshal (and there will still be plenty of bagpipes). Wear green!

➡ F downtown to 42nd-Bryant Park and find a spot along Fifth Avenue; parade runs north on Fifth Avenue from 44th to 72nd Streets. Tuesday, March 17 starting at 11:00 a.m. and continuing to late afternoon. Free. nycstpatricksparade.org

Women’s History Month: Women in Art

Beginning in 1990, NYC-based photographer Barbara Yoshida traveled the world conducting a photographic study of the female artists who preceded her. Yoshida captured everyone from sculptors to textile artisans to create *100 Portraits of Women Artists*, “an inclusive survey of women artists who have broken through barriers to express ideas that are at once aesthetically and politically significant.”

➡ F downtown to Jay Street-MetroTech and walk southeast to the Salena Gallery, ground floor of the Library Learning Center at Long Island University (1 University Plaza). Through March 27, Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Free.

msWIRE.us/Yoshida

Women in the City

NYC Women: Make it Here, Make it Happen is a video series from the NYC Commission on Women, honoring 31 New York women who perform a variety of vital roles throughout the city. The series airs on NYC Life (TimeWarner channel 25; FIOS 25/525, nyc.gov/media, or iTunes) every day through March 31, or you can watch one-minute clips online at msWIRE.us/NYCWomen.

➡ You don’t have to take the F anywhere!

Irish in the City

The Tenement Museum tells the stories of 87 Orchard Street, a tenement building that housed nearly 7,000 immigrant workers after its construction in 1863. The building is open for tours only, but they have something for every age and interest: see different parts of the building like the apartments or a garment workshop, meet residents played by costumed interpreters, or walk the Lower East Side to learn how immigrants shaped the neighborhood. If you want to honor the occasion, they offer a special tour on “Irish Outsiders.”

➡ F downtown to Delancey Street and walk west to 97 Orchard Street. Tours are offered every day at various times. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$20 for students and seniors. For a complete tour schedule and to purchase tickets, go to tenement.org.

COMING UP

Continuing Events & Activities

A listing of **repeating** or **regularly held** meetings & events (a listing of other events scheduled for this weekend and in coming weeks appears on page 3)

ART EXHIBITS

Islander Piaskowski presents a one-artist photo show, *Bloom*, Octagon Gallery. 9am-8pm daily through Apr 19.

PARKS

Southpoint Park open daily 6am-10pm.

Lighthouse Park open daily 7am-9pm.

Four Freedoms Park daily 9am-5pm. **Closed Tue.** Free guided tours **Sat** 11am, 3pm; **Sun** 11am.

CLASSES

Art, taught by members of the Roosevelt Island Visual Art Association (RIVAA), **Sat** 11am-2pm, Sportspark. Free.

Hands-Only CPR Training, **1st Wed** 10:45am, Senior Center, 546 Main St.; **2nd Tue** 8pm, 546 Main St 12th-floor conference room; **3rd Thu** 5pm, Child School, 587 Main St.; **4th Sun** 5:45pm, Good Shepherd Center, 543 Main.

We Are New York English conversation groups, Fr 10:30am-12:30pm, through Fri Mar 27, Library.

MUSIC

First Sunday Jazz Salon, **1st Sun** 5-7pm, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St. \$10 donation. Cancelled for March and April; resumes May 4.

EXERCISE & SPORTS (alphabetical)

Basketball (all ages), **Sat** 2-5pm, Sportspark. Free.

Basketball (adults), **Mon-Thu** 7:30-9:30pm, PS/IS 217. Free.

Bike New York classes continue through winter; schedule at BikeNewYork.org.

Pilates with Karen, **Tue & Thu** 7:15pm; **Wed** 8:45am, 10am; **Fri** 9am, 10am; **Sat** 10am. Info 212-750-6223.

Ping Pong (all ages), **Tue Wed Fri** 6-9pm, Sportspark. Free.

RI Moms on the Move walk and exercise program, **Fri** 11am, Visitor Kiosk in Tramway Plaza. Free. To confirm time: Eva.Bosbach@gmail.com.

Sportspark extended hours (ages 16-25), **Fri-Sat** 9pm-midnight. **Weight-lifting and basketball.** Free. **Note:** ID and proof of Island residency required.

Swimming* (all ages; no instructor) – **Sat-Sun** 12-3pm, **Mon-Fri** 6-10am, **Mon Wed Thu Fri** 7:30-10:30pm, Sportspark.

Swimming* (18 yrs+) – **Sat-Sun** 4-7pm, **Tue** 7:30-10:30pm, Sportspark.

Swimming* – Water Aerobics, **Sun** 12-1pm, **Wed & Fri** 9-10am, Sportspark.

Swimming* – Master class, **Mon Wed Fri** 7:30-8:30pm, Sportspark.

(*\$5; free for disabled, seniors 60+, and ages 0-3.)

Yoga (open-level), **Mon & Thu** 6:15-7:15pm, **Sat** 11:15am-12:15pm, Sportspark. \$5. Mats available.

Yoga (Vinyassa-flow) with Keren Messer, **Mon** 7:45pm, **Fri** 10am, Good Shepherd Center. Info: KerenMsr@gmail.com.

Yoga (Hatha) with Keren Messer, **Tue** 6:30pm, Good Shepherd Center.

Yoga with Jax Schott, **Wed** 7:30-8:40pm, Island Kids, 536 Main St. \$15.

Yoga (open-level) with Lauren Blankstein, **Thu** 7:30-8:30pm, PS/IS 217 Beacon. Free.

Zumba, **Mon** 6:30-7:30pm, **Thu** 6:30-7:30pm, **Sat** 10-11am, Sportspark. \$5.

BIRTH THROUGH TODDLER (Sat-Fri)

Baby Story Time (0-18 mo), **Mon** 10:30am, Library. Advance registration required.

Baby Playtime (0-18 mo), **Mon** 11am, Library.

Story Time with Olya (pre-school ages), **Tue & Thu** 9am, Main Street Sweets, 559 Main St. Free.

Mommy & Me Swim Classes for children 6 months to 3 years. Spots available for drop-ins **Wed** 10:30 and **Sun** 1:30 or 2:00. Info at rioc.ny.gov.

Toddler Story Time (18-36 mo), **Wed** 11am, Library. Registration required. Free.

Toddler Play Time (18-36 mo), **Wed** 11:30am, Library.

Island Kids Baby Group (0-14 mo), **Thu** 10:30-11:30am, 536 Main St. Info: IslandKidsRI@gmail.com.

Read Aloud (3-6 yrs), **Fri** 3:30pm, Library.

OLDER KIDS (listed Sat-Fri)

Tennis – New York Junior Tennis League (ages 5-18), **Sat-Sun** 6-8am, Racquet Club. Free.

Swimming classes (age 3-up), **Sat** 3-4pm, Sportspark. \$15 or \$100/10 weeks. Questions/registration, ryansherrill84@gmail.com or 917-261-2771.

Tennis – Junior Tennis, **Sat & Mon-Fri** after school, Racquet Club. Info 212-935-0250.

Teen Time (ages 13-18), **Mon-Fri** 3pm, Library.

Beacon After-School Program for grades 1-8, **Mon-Fri** 3-6pm, PS/IS 217. Free. Info: 212-527-2505 or tinyurl.com/RIyouth.

Open Gym for high school students, **Mon & Wed** 6-8pm, PS/IS 217.

Board Games (5-12 yrs), **Tue** 4pm, Library. Free.

Teen Game Night, **Wed** 6pm, Main Street Sweets, 559 Main St.

Reading Aloud (children), **Fri** 3:30pm, Library.

Girl Scouts (6-13 yrs), **Fri** 6-8pm, PS/IS 217. Info: 212-527-2505.

Art for Kids with Connie Tanner (ages 3-8), last **Sun**, 10-11:30am, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St. \$10 suggested donation; materials supplied. No reservation required.

SENIORS

Lunch, **Mon-Fri** noon, Senior Center, 546 Main St. \$1.50. Menus outside social worker’s office. Also see listing below.

REGULAR MEETINGS (listed Sat-Fri)

Toastmasters, **2nd & 4th Mon** 7:30pm. Info: 212-751-9577.

Sci-Fi Discussion Group, **1st Tue** 6:30pm, Library.

114th Precinct Community Meeting, **4th Tue** 7pm, Riccardo’s by the Bridge, 2101 24th Av., Astoria.

RIRA Common Council meeting **1st Wed** (except Jul-Aug) 8pm, Good Shepherd Center.

Women’s Health Organization, last **Wed** 6:30pm, 546 Main St, 12th floor conference room.

Book Discussion, **3rd Thu** 6:30-8pm, Library.

OFFICE HOURS

RIOC’s Community Office Hours, **Mon** 3-5pm, 591 Main St.

Constituent Service Hours for State Senator Jose Serrano and/or staff, **Tue**, alternating between Senior Center, 4-7pm and Library, 3-6pm (Oct 28). Info: 212-828-5829.

Conversations with Cornell Tech Staff at Gallery RIVAA, **Wed** 10am-12noon & 1-4pm, through March; **Wed & Fri** April and after, 527 Main St.

Constituent Service Hours for City Councilmember Ben Kallos, **4th Wed** 4-7pm, Senior Center, 546 Main St.

OTHER

Clinic on Housing Law, **1st & 3rd Mon** 3-6pm, district office of City Councilmember Ben Kallos, 244 E. 93rd St. RSVP and questions to 212-860-1950 or RSVP@BenKallos.com.

Knitting & Crocheting Circle (adults), **Thu** 11:30am, Library. Info: nypl.org.

Food Box Orders from Helping Families Help Themselves, ordering period 1st-11th of month. Menu online at jolinfoodbox.com. Info 347-985-7540; pickup period at 546 Main St. 15th of month.

Senior Center

Monday
10:00 **Zumba**
11:00 **Computers**
5:00 **Brain & Body Stretch**

Tuesday
10:20 **Shoppers’ Bus**
10:30 **Building Strength**
11:00 **Blood Pressure**
1:00 **Paint & Sculpt**

Wednesday
9:00-1:00 **Free Tax Help** (open to all)
9:30 **Yoga Stretch**
10:20 **Shoppers’ Bus**
10:30 **Salsa with Luis**
10:45 **Spanish**
11:00 **Social Media for Seniors:**
Facebook, Instagram, Photos, more
10:45 **Spanish**
1:00 **Bridge**
1:30 **Scrabble**
6:00-8:00 **Computer Lab**

Thursday
9:15 **Chair Pilates**
10:30 **Zumba**
12:30 **Movie**
1:00-2:30 **Theatre tickets** at discount prices; see Rema or Annie
3:00 **Computer Basics** (Library)

Friday
9:00 **Building Strength**
10:30 **Computers**
10:30 **Tai Chi**
12:00 **Korean Exercise**
2:00 **Art with John**
2:00 **Pokeno**
7:00 **Games** (RISA)

Special Events

Flea Market, **Sat Mar 21** 10am-4pm. Vendors wanted; \$20/table. See Pilar 10am-12noon.

Nutrition Lecture, **Tue Mar 24**, 11:30am.

Seawright, from page 1
including two of the men who opposed Seawright for the Assembly seat, Ed Hartzog and David Menegon.

Dad as Role Model

Growing up on a ranch in Texas, Seawright was the third of four daughters raised by a stay-at-home mom. “My father was my role model,” she told *The WIRE*. He owned a pharmacy, and Seawright worked at his side on weekends. Today, she’s clearly a solution-finder. She’ll look you in the eye and grasp your point without needing repetition. Her likely reaction? “How can we fix it?” Seawright came to New York City to raise funds for Ann Richards’s bid for Governor of Texas. They’d met in 1982, when Richards was in the Texas legislature. Mayor David Dinkins provided the campaign with fundraising support, including a NYC office. Once here, she enrolled in law school at the City University of New York, where she met and married the love of her life, Jay Hershenson, a native New Yorker who’s currently CUNY’s Senior Vice-Chancellor of University Relations and Secretary of the Board of Trustees. Seawright has remained here ever since the couple connected, and she beams when describing her two almost-grown children, who were educated in the City’s public schools. “My inspirations for running for office are my children,” she said in her inauguration

speech. Her son Bradley now attends SUNY Albany and was recently elected to the student senate. Haley, her daughter, is news editor of her high school newspaper in her sophomore year. Through the years, Seawright has served as an Assistant District Attorney, an Administrative Law Judge, a member of Community Board 8, and an aide to two Congressmen, including Lloyd Bentsen, who ran for Vice President of the United States. She is no stranger to the “politics” of politics. Seawright’s legal background suits her role as a member of the Assembly’s Legislative Judiciary Committee, which formulates laws. The first bill she sponsored, if passed, “will immediately stop construction of the Waste Transfer Station at East 91st Street.” Her concerns include “the possibility of smells drifting over the water to Roosevelt Island.” Seawright’s appointment to the Corporations, Authorities and Commissions Committee positions her to work on the longstanding question of democracy in governance of Roosevelt Island. At her inauguration, she received rousing support from Islanders in attendance with her announcement, “My office is already drafting legislation to address the governance of Roosevelt Island that takes into account the Governor’s veto of past legislation, while maintaining the principle of increased community representation.”

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Island Wine Filling Gap for Imbibers

by **Laura A. Russo**

Bacchus would be pleased. Five years after The Grog Shop closed, Roosevelt Island finally has a wine shop. Island Wine & Spirits opened in October at the old Grog Shop location, 605 Main Street, with a vast selection and knowledgeable staff, catering to connoisseurs and novices alike. The bright and airy space, managed by Salim Issa and Amanda Rodriguez, boasts an expansive variety of wines and spirits, including wines from at least 15 countries, more than 20 different kinds of bourbon, over 25 vodkas, and a well-curated selection of single-malt scotches. The shop opened just in time to help residents celebrate a bit more brightly over the holidays, and enthusiasm has not waned throughout the long winter, according to the store managers. “It’s great to see the community’s excitement,” says Issa. “People really like coming in and seeing what we have.” The pair welcome residents into the shop with gusto. “We want people to come in and talk to us. This is not just a transaction. We want to be an anchor in this community,” Rodriguez says. Issa adds, “This is not your average liquor store, where you walk in and someone just points you in the direction of something. We really like getting involved in helping people make a selection.” Rodriguez, who has five years’ experience managing wine stores, says that she takes customer interaction seriously. “It’s not just about a bottle of Cabernet, but when I get to know you, then I know what to recommend when we get new products. The next time you come in, I want to hear if you liked it, what you thought.” Issa feels just as strongly as Rodriguez. Growing up in the industry – his family has been in the liquor business since 1992 – he stresses the importance of the store being community-oriented. “It’s not just about making a recommendation, but about education and building relationships with Island organizations. “Residents are definitely learning about different [wine] regions and varietals. It’s great to help them expand their knowledge and try new things.” One of the ways that Island Wine & Spirits is fostering new and old oenophiles alike is through regular

tastings at the store. “Tastings offer people the opportunity to take a chance on something they would never think to try,” Rodriguez says. A recent tasting featuring a wine from Château Saint Paul was especially popular, selling more than 20 bottles. What else are Islanders buying to imbibe? “Islanders are really expanding their palettes,” says Issa. “Italian wines seem especially popular lately – varieties like Chianti and Montepulciano – and more and more people are branching out into different kinds of bourbon.” Tastings are not the only way that Island Wine & Spirits is increasing their presence in the community. The store is also forging relationships with Island non-profits like the Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance. Kristi Towey, Chair of the MST&DA Gala Board, found the staff of Island Wine & Spirits a big help when planning last month’s event. “The staff was very receptive when approached,” she said, and although the event’s licensing requirements limited the extent of their involvement. “They were happy to give us advice, and provided great information.” Towey also turned to the staff for help when selecting gifts for members of the Gala Committee. “They helped me choose a really nice bottle, then wrapped and presented each beautifully,” she said. “The shop is absolutely a necessity. This island needed a wine store. They have a great range of prices and products, and are very accommodating.” Island resident Rey Castro agrees. “We’re just so lucky to finally have them on the Island.” As the weather warms up, residents can expect even more from Island Wine & Spirits. The store already offers free delivery throughout the Island, and is also planning to launch a website later this year to further expand its services, allowing residents to place online orders and see real-time inventory. When asked what Islanders should know about Island Wine & Spirits, Rodriguez stressed the importance of the residents themselves. “I love engaging with our customers. The interaction is so important, and all day I get to talk about what I am passionate about.” “In the end,” says Issa, “we really want to serve the community.”

Cornell, from page 1
in 2017, the barging will again drop to one per day. Each barge can hold about 10 large trucks, which would lower traffic on Main Street by that amount. “Not every truck is equal,” Winters said. “Getting the trucks that are the heaviest and most impactful off of Main Street would yield better results than taking the smaller trucks off.”

The current goal is to get peak truck traffic below the predicted average of 37, with a focus on heavy trucks like those carrying heavy machinery, steel, and façade deliveries. Concrete mixers cannot be barged. Despite all this new information, residents attending the meeting still expressed concern about truck traffic. Winters tried to put it into perspective, saying that even with a peak of 67 trucks per day, the trucking would only increase northbound weekday traffic on Main Street by 1.8% per day. Bringing the average daily trucks down to the goal of 37 would mean an increase of 1%. “I think there is a perception out there among people who don’t have all the details that there will be thousands and thousands of trucks and it’s really going to overwhelm Main Street,” Winters said. “I think it’s important for people to understand there is a lot of background traffic.” He points out that Goldwater Hospital traffic, once contributing about 500 cars per day, has been eliminated. Other Cornell-related traffic will be limited because workers will be unable to park on-site. Cornell and Tishman meet with RIOC weekly to discuss potential issues with deliveries, access, and road closures, and to develop a protocol for oversize loads and escort vehicles. Residents brought up the possibility that planned construction on the Island-access helix will coincide with peak trucking time, but the Task Force was unable to comment, as helix construction has not been scheduled. RICC is waiting for information from RIOC regarding the extent to which the helix could be damaged due to load-bearing limitations as well as wear and tear. Winters reiterated that Cornell and Tishman are working to meet the 40% commitment, removing over 13,700 trucks from the roadway. He said they have reduced about 4,000 trucks from the projection, partly by making building design modifications. There are still 9,600 trucks to redirect. “Our goal throughout the project is to barge about 10,000 trucks... by the time demolition is done, we’ll be about 60% of the way toward that commitment.” Winters also noted that the concrete mixers coming onto the Island aren’t full because of the 36-ton weight limit on the bridge. He said the trucking numbers could be reduced by another 10% if the mixers were full.

RICC said, “There will never be enough barging to please the Roosevelt Island community,” but in an email to *The WIRE*, the group expressed pleasure that Cornell created a barging plan designed with community concerns in mind. **Air Quality and...** There was also good news on the air-quality front. RICC said, “The Task Force meeting provided the first modest break in the long-time void between community demands for air-quality measurement on Main Street and Cornell’s insistence that air quality will be measured only on site, and in a manner that does not measure dangerous fine particulates.” About saving the trees on the south end of the site, Winters said, “There is no decision made on trees. Three separate City agencies need to rule, but two are already in favor of leaving the curb [and the trees] where it is.” Cornell confirmed that park access for pedestrians and vehicles would be maintained throughout the construction process. **Education** Cornell Tech K-12 Director Diane Levitt addressed the board for the first time since July. She affirmed that she meets with parents and staff from PS/IS 217 every six to eight weeks to discuss ways that Cornell Tech can help develop STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) opportunities at the school. She said, “In the area of professional development, which is one of the areas we’ve agreed to discuss, [Cornell Tech] has been involved in several ways.” Levitt listed Bootstrap, which started in October, and Codesters, which also started this past fall and is offered after school. Bootstrap uses online game software to teach algebra. Levitt says, “Algebra is a fulcrum, it is a very powerful predictor of academic success.” Levitt articulated Cornell’s goal, “...to create professional development for middle-school staff that empowers them to embed computational literacy and digital fluency in their curriculum across subject areas.” Whether or not Cornell’s goals amount to the “adoption” of the school that Cornell agreed to in its lease of the site is still a matter of definition. Unlike the experts that RICC has had testify about air quality, there has never been a school representative or STEM education expert at a Task Force meeting, carrying a wish list. This meeting was no different. Principal Mandana Beckman did not attend, nor did she send a member of her administration to stand alongside RICC in holding Cornell accountable. **The Relationship** It has taken time for the school to figure out what they should be demanding from this relationship. Administrators and PTA cite a lack of expertise. It is easy to copy

another school and ask for the same equipment as they have, but as PS/IS 217 Science and Math Coach and Sustainability Coordinator Ursula Fokine says, “We have to work within the constraints of the system [the Board of Education]. By the time we get something, it’s obsolete.” Fokine also said, “If Cornell could facilitate purchasing and maintenance, that would be an extraordinarily welcome thing.” Principal Beckman told *The WIRE* that parents have been aggressive in demanding more from the relationship with Cornell, but added that there is no money on the table. In a written statement prepared for *The WIRE*, RICC said, “The problem seems to be that no matter how strongly Cornell leverages their other relationships, if they do not also commit to funding, few programs can be started.” Christina Delfico and Ellen Polivy of the Task Force suggested adding a clause into corporate-sponsor contracts mandating a community education give-back. Cornell Tech received a \$50M naming gift from Verizon that Levitt explained “is all building,” countering, “Everybody knows I have my hand out. I am a famous beggar all over our campus. I am aware of the issue, and it is important to me, too.” Both the principal and Cornell affirm that they have regular meetings. **Hackathon** An April 17 date has been set for the event now being called HACK Roosevelt Island. Levitt said it will be run by Cornell MBA and Master’s of Engineering students. Because it is being held so close to Earth Day, the agenda will be game design on environmental topics. Middle-school students will learn some coding and some design. Levitt said, “This is our learning year. I think [the event] will be good, but I think it will be even better next year. We’re really excited and we know we have good material.” Levitt reported that she has had several “really engaged” meetings with the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), the entity that funds the Beacon program. Together, they are planning a summer program in tech in partnership with the City University of New York. Levitt says, “I am really optimistic that it will happen.” Levitt also reported that Cornell hosted a December seminar called “Coding and Beyond.” She said, “There were educators, policy makers, funders, after-school program leaders, and program developers. Administrators from PS 217 were invited and Ursula [Fokine] attended.” The next Cornell Construction Task Force Meetings are scheduled for April 27, July 27 and October 26.

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RIRA Column, from page 3
the financial assistance needed by many Island families who utilize the programs. The Cabrini Catholic Parish faces similar RIOCI-imposed challenges, with the demand for up-front payment of three months' rent to reserve the Good Shepherd Center for its religious services (which the Church says it cannot pay, since it does not receive its collections in advance). Unsurprisingly, the Common Council voted nearly unanimously in support of two resolutions admonishing RIOCI for its burdensome lease rates, and demanding that RIOCI roll them back and work with both organizations to find amicable solutions for use of RIOCI-controlled spaces. Show your support of MST&DA at a time when support for the arts and enrichment of our children's lives is being whittled away. And help guarantee a place of worship and charity for Island residents who are immobile or who have no other community to turn to. Voice our continued commitment to keeping the services of MTS&DA and the Cabrini Catholic Parish available on the Island. Contact RIOCI directly by either telephone at 212-832-4540 or email at Erica.Spencer-EL@rioc.ny.gov, and urge RIOCI to work with these organizations to ensure their futures here.

Bike New York, from page 3
art event in which we painted our white storage container under the helix ramp. In November, we went on a guided historic ride with the Roosevelt Island Historical Society. We've also worked with the Beacon program at PS/IS 217 and The Child School to offer after-school and summer-camp programming. On Wednesdays, we partner with The Child School for their Wacky Wednesday program. Under the guidance of our instructors, kids learn how to ride, work on their bike skills, go on rides, and learn basic bike-maintenance techniques. It's our first time doing weekday programming, and we hope to replicate this model at our other centers throughout the city.
Right now, we're gearing up for a full schedule of events on the Island. At the end of March, we'll be hosting a series of presentations to introduce ourselves and our mission to residents. The presentations will include safety tips for riding a bike on the Island. Light refreshments will be provided, along with some giveaways. We are also in the midst of planning the Second Annual Spring Kickoff Party. Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 30th! All our programs and events are designed to educate people on best practices for cycling and to help make Roosevelt Island a more bike-friendly community.
We want to encourage Islanders not only to participate in our free classes, but also to get involved as volunteers and instructors. Volunteering is a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, and to help make other's lives more fulfilling by getting them on bikes! Bike New York depends on an enormous team of fantastic volunteers to assist with classes, events, and outreach efforts. Residents who are more experienced have the option of becoming paid Bike New York instructors. Instructors teach our classes all over the city, but we would love to hire new instructors specifically for our Roosevelt Island classes. Bike New York provides training for all volunteers and instructors. For more information, please contact Tim Haney at thaney@bike.nyc.
In addition to the Tour, which happens on the first Sunday of May, Bike New York organizes numerous annual events, including Bike Expo New York and smaller regional and community rides. For more information, please visit our website at www.bike.nyc or contact me at cgoodspeed@bike.nyc. You can also see our events advertised on the Main Street kiosks, the Roosevelt Islander blog, and, of course, in *The Main Street WIRE*.
For a complete listing of our classes, please visit www.bike.nyc/education.

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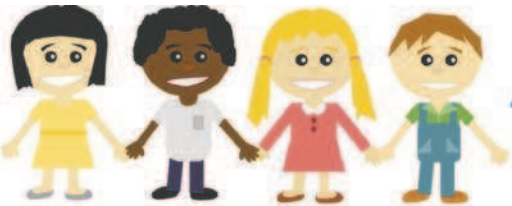
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